Las Vegas Gazette.

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Charles Ilfeld, Secretary.

NEW MEXICO.

Her Natural Resources and Attractions.

Published by Elias Brevoort,
General Land Agent, Santa Fe, N. M.

Republished by authority of the Author.

MOUNTAINS, STREAMS, Etc,

The one hundred and twenty-one thousand, two hundred square miles, or nearly seventy seven and a half millions of acres of land in New Mexico, are drained by innumerable rivers and creeks, some of the principal of which are the Rio Grande del Norte, flowing centrally from North to South through the Territory, the San Juan, the Chama, the Canadian, the Cañada or Santa Cruz, the Picuris, the Pojuaque, the Tesuque, the Santa Fé, the Galisteo, the San Cristobal, the Colorado, the Arroyo Hondo, the Taos, the Lucero, the Pueblo, the Pinos, the Ojo Caliente, the Jemez, the San José, the Puerco, the Gallo, the Alamosa, the Gila, the Mimbres, the Pecos, the Bonito, the Hondo, the Ruidoso, the Gallinas, the Conchas, the Mora, the Cimarron, the Vermejo, the Sapello, the Peñasco, the Chamizal, the Tecolote, the Agua Azul, the Ocate, the Nutrias, the Navajoe, the Rito Blanco, the Piedras, the Florido, the Animas, the Plata, the Colorado Chiquito, the Zuñi, the Seven Rivers, the Agua Negra, and a number of smaller mountain streams of more or less volume.

From the Rio Grande to the Colorado of the West the whole country presents the character of a vast upland, crossed by a succession of several mountain ridges, and basin shaped valleys, interrupted by the product of recent volcanic eruptions in the form of extinct craters, cones, and streams of lava, which have overflowed and buried up the lower sedimentary rocks. The principal mountain axes exhibit a granite nucleus, which, at certain points, is exposed to view in irregular mountain ranges, tending northwest and southeast, and constituting the general frame-work of the country, as exhibited in the Sierra Madre, the Mogollon Range and the Pinaleño Mountains of Central Arizona. Intermediate to these is the great table-land or *mesa* formation of Western New Mexico and Eastern Arizona, comprising the sedimentary strata of triassic and cretaceous rocks, which spread out into broad uplands, abruptly terminated by steep mural declivities, bounding valleys of erosion, or presenting isolated buttes and fantastically castellated rocks, that serve to give a peculiar aspect to the scenery. The principal foci of extinct volcanic action are represented by the elevated cones of San Mateo and San Francisco, attaining an elevation of over 12,000 feet above the sea, whose alpine slopes, reaching above the timber line, present in their covering of snow the only wintry feature pertaining to this latitude.

It is in the eastern section of this district, New Mexico, that we meet with the most populous and flourishing of the interesting tribes, known as Pueblo Indians; here they secure not only defensive positions for their towns on the tabled summits of isolated hills, but also fertile valleys adjoining, suited to their rude agriculture, and a wild scope of grazing country, limited only by the necessity of protection from the thievish and roving Navajo and Apache.

What is known as the Navajo country, extending still further to the West and North, comprises a similar character of broken country, with fertile valleys, grassy slopes, and deeply sheltered cañons, especially adapted to their mode of life as nomadic and at the same time partially agricultural, still better suited, however, to the wants of an energetic civilized community, who can properly appreciate the advantages of a healtful climate, combined with a useful variety of soil, and that picturesque beauty of scenery which adds such a charm to rural life.

The district of the Rio Grande, so termed for convenience in describing the country, although chiefly confined within the bounds of New Mexico, penetrates into the southern portion of Colorado. Beginning at Panche Pass, about 38° 30′ north latitude, it extends southward to the southern boundary of the Territory, and is about five hundred miles long. As far south as Santa Fe its width is torably uniform, averaging very near one hundred miles, but here it begins to expand rapidly on the eastern side, to embrace the area drained by the Pecos, terminating in this direction in the *Llano Estacado* or "Staked Plain." Excluding the Staked Plain from our calculation, the entire arrea of this district amounts to about seventy thousand square miles, about five thousand five hundred of which belong to Colorado, according to the old boundary line.

The district may conveniently be divided into three sections, corresponding with the natural aspect of the country: First, the San Luis Valley (sometimes called the San Luis Park.) which constitutes that portion of the district which lies north of the point where the Rio de Taos enters into the Rio Grande; second the central portion of the Territory, including the Rio Grande Valley proper and the tributary valleys leading into it between the southern rim of the San Luis Valley and the southern boundary of the Territory; third, the Pecos Valley, which, beginning east of the mountains, about opposite Santa Fé, runs a little East of South to the Texas line, and includes only the arrea drained by the Pecos River.

This district embraces nearly two thirds of New Mexico, leaving a strip along the western boundary varying from fifty to one hundred miles in width, and drained by the tributaries of the Colorado and Gila rivers, and a triangular arrea in the northeast corner drained by the Canadian river. It embraces the central, and, with the exception of a few valleys, the most productive portion of the Territory; and, although much is occupied by broken ranges of mountains and elevated mesas, yet there is a large portion which can be irrigated by the streams that traverse it, and a still larger ratio which affords rich pasturage for sheep and cattle. Here also can be found every variety of climate, from the cold of the mountain region along its northern rim, to the tropical valleys of its southern border.

The length of the Rio Grande Valley from North to South, counting from the mouth of the Rio de Taos to the Mexican line, is about three hundred and fifty miles, with an average width of one hundred and ten miles. It is difficult to estimate, even with approximate accuracy, the amount of arable land in this area, as, with the comparatively narrow valley proper of the Rio Grande, it lies in small, irregular valleys and detached spots. And, in addition to this difficulty, great diversity of opinion exists in regard to the average width of this valley, varying from two to twenty miles. Yet this difference is not wholly due to error in either party, as the term "valley" is used in different senses, some meaning thereby only the bottoms immediately along the river, while others include the lower terraces which at some points flank the bottoms. Perhaps the best data we have upon which to base an estimate is to be found in the report of Lieutenant Whipple, who, after careful examination, estimates the cultivable arrea of a belt thirty miles wide, and one hundred and eighty miles long, east and west—reaching from Anton Chico to Campbell's Pass—at three hundred and sixty square miles, or one fifteenth of the whole arrea. As this belt reaches directly across the entire width of the section under consideration, it may be taken as an average of the whole; for, although it includes the valley of the San Jose on the West, the east end stretches over the broad Mesa de la Vista almost from Anton Chico to San Antonio. This proportion would give for the section nearly two thousand six hundred square miles of tillable land, which may be increased by the proper husbanding of water.

In order to understand properly the differences in climate and productions observable in the different parts of this section, it is necessary, not only to take into consideration the latitude, but also the variations in altitude, and proximity to high mountains. Beginning at the San Luis Valley in Colorado, with an elevation of 7,000 feet above the level of the sea, we find, when we reach Santa Fe, in New Mexico, the height is 6,800, which is higher than some of the valleys further north. Keeping on the same plateau, and moving south, the elevations of the principal points are as follows: Galisteo, 6,165; Los Cerrillos, 5,804; Cañon Blanco, 6,320, and a little southwest of the cañon, near Laguna Blanca, 6,943 feet. Moving southwest from this point toward Albuquerque, we find the elevation at San Antonio is 6,408 feet. But when we descent into the immediate valley of the Rio Grande, as far north as Peña Blanca, it is only 5,288 feet above the sea level, or 1,552 lower than at Santa Fé. At San Felipe it is 5,220; at Albuquerque, 5,026, at Isleta, 4,910; at Socorro, 4,560; at Alamosa, 4,200 and at El Paso about 3,800.

Strange as it may appear, when we cross the ridge east of Santa Fé, to the headwaters of the Pecos, we find the altitude at Pecos Village but 6,360 feet—about 500 feet lower than at Santa Fe; while at Anton Chico it is only 5,371 feet, corresponding very nearly with that of the Rio Grande valley at Peña Blanca.

These particulars in regard to the elevation of this region show that, sweeping around the southern terminus of the Rocky Mountain range, is an elevated plateau, or extended mesa, which, reaching north along the inside of the basin for some distance, occupies both sides of the river, but southward recedes from it. At Peña Blanca we descend into the Rio Grande Valley proper, which continues along the southern course of the river with little interruption throughout the rest of the Territory. From this point south, fruits and the tender vegetables and plants are grown with ease, which fail no farther north than Santa Fe.

But the difference in altitude is not the only influence tending to vary the temperature and vegetation between the northern and southern parts of the section, for about opposite the point where this lower level begins, the mountain range on the east terminates, and as a matter of course, the depression of temperature and the cold of the nights, so far as caused by the proximity of snowy peaks and icy waters, also ceases.

From the region of the Galisteo south the features of the country change; instead of the vast and lofty ranges of the Rocky Mountains, a succession of shorter, narrower, and less lofty mountains, forming a chain which runs directly north and south a short distance east of the river and almost parallel with it; and what is somewhat remarkable, instead of corresponding with the range east of the San Luis Valley, this chain runs almost directly in a line with the bottom of the valley. While the mountains have thus diminished, on the other hand the miniature table lands of the regions farther north are here replaced by vast plateaus which spread over the country, forming its general level, out of which are scooped the valleys and basins.

On the east side of the Rio Grande; between the Taos Valley and Joya, the country is broken and mountainous, mostly covered with heavy growth of timber, chiefly pine and fir. This area is traversed east and west by a few small streams, which are bordered by narrow strips of cultivable lands. The principal ones are the Peñasco, Pueblo and Chamizal; the first being a vigorous creek which traverses a valley varying in width from one to five miles, which is flanked on each side by high bluffs. A good part of it is already under cultivation, and, as the soil is fertile and the valley sheltered the crops produced are quite heavy. The other two are smaller and less important than the Peñasco.

CLIPPINGS.

The Rev. Murray says any one can be emphatic and not swear. For instance one can say, "Go to the Adirondacks, you old humbug."

John Miller, of Indiana, had both legs and arms cut off by a mowing machine. A home paper says that "it seems to be the opinion of the doctors that it is a serious case."

When a stranger stands on a public square in Denver, spits on his hands and cries out: "climb on to me by thousands!" even the postmaster pulls off his coat and goes out to make the response a success.

The New York thieves have formed a society called "The Honorable Thieves;" but they are way behind the age—Congress beats them ten years.

They describe the Mayor of St. Louis by saying that he is bald headed and wears shoes

A Chicago paper thinks that it would be a good plan to cut the heads off of all persons dying so that there would be no danger of burying them alive.

Cincinnati has a young lady who blushes, goes to bed at nine, eats heartily, speaks plain English, respects her mother, doesn't want to marry a lord and knows how to cook.

Beaver Dam lovers don't care so much about who marries them and how the church is decorated, but they want thirty two kegs of lager driven around to the house at the right hour, sure.

A Philadelphia negro sweats brick dust, and they talk of turning him into a centennial brick yard.

At a social gathering in Chicago not a single one of the thirty seven persons could repeat the Lord's prayer, but all present could play poker and "cut-throat." And yet they say that the great fires were not a judgement.

A Massachusetts merchant has been in business forty-seven years and never advertised, and never means to. He commenced on a capital of $800, and has run it up to $805.

When in the summer season a great man dies in Paris, Kentucky, all the folks have strawberry short cake for dinner. In the winter time they have pigs feet and 'possum meat.

In Turkey a man with red hair is patted on the back by all the high officials and bad boys dare not even wink at him.

They have got so in Louisville that they can make a barrel of one stave and there is no doubt but that they will soon fill it with whiskey out of a quart cup.

What is bull-head luck? asks a Kentucky paper. Twisting a mule's tail and getting away from his heels comes near enough to answer the question.

Massachusetts brags of Boston as the emporium of America, but Kansas goes it several better with its Emporia.

Women's dress reform clubs are usually short lived. Some member is sure to appear in decent clothes and all the rest will follow suit.

A youthful Pennsylvania granger about to be chastised by his father the other day, called for his grandfather to protect him from the middleman.

We are constantly told that "the evening wore on," but what the evening wore on such occasions we are not informed. Was it the close of a summer's day?

A Mississippi pilot saw the comet the other night, and immediately cried, "I've got them: snakes I've had before, but now the stars have got tails on 'em; I'm a dead man."

A Pennsylvania toad swallowed a fire-fly. The local paper says: "While the latter was exploring the interior of the toad, the light of his lantern was visible to outsiders through the skin of the detested reptile."

Some men are born to misfortune. At a Fourth of July picnic a Covington chap got his eye punched for speaking to another fellows's girl, and when he tearfully explained that he'd knowed her these thirty five years he got all his hair pulled out.

An engineer on the Western North Carolina railroad shouted to a crowd of rustics who had gathered to see the first train of cars come in: "Put down your umbrellas! you'll scare the engine off the track!" The umbrellas were lowered at once.

"I know many respectable ladies who smoke," said a London justice.—That man must have seen New Mexico.

You never saw such a happy lot of people as we had here yesterday, said a landlady in Indiana to a newly arrived guest; there were thirteen couples of them. What! thirteen couples just married? Oh, no, sir; thirteen couples just divorced.